

A King-sized Crisis & Its God-sized Solution - Daniel 2:1-30

The most powerful man on the planet can't get a good night's rest. He's robbed of his sleep. He's bothered by his apparently recurring dream. He is anxious to know what it means. Maybe his demand for an interpretation comes from questions like these:

What does this dream mean? Is it an omen of my end? Is it a sign that I'm going to be assassinated? Is my great kingdom going to collapse?"

The mysterious dream leads to a king-sized crisis in the kingdom of Babylon. The Babylonian wise guys are called in to clear things up for the king, but these pagan practitioners are not able to deliver. Like the magic men of Egypt centuries before them, these guys tap out. Their bench isn't that deep. They're not up to the challenge. And more time won't help. They simply don't have what it takes to tell the troubled king what his dream was and then what it means.

And neither do Daniel or his friends. In fact, there's no one on earth who can give the king what he wants and thereby extinguish the king's deadly anger. But Daniel and his buddies know that there is a God in heaven who can reveal mysteries. In this time of crisis, they go to the one true God. And God kindly solves the life-or-death crisis.

As was the case in Egypt, so now in Babylon, the God of Israel puts His reality and superiority on display. The false gods are found wanting. The pagan practitioners come up short. The true God comes through.

In these verses we see both a recipe for crisis and a strategic response. The recipe for crisis is a sleepless, curious, anxious, ruthless king plus clueless, powerless advisors who can't give the king what he demands (2:1-11). The strategic response goes like this:

1. **S_____ c_____ in God.** (2:12-16)

- The execution order has been given, but Daniel keeps his cool.

2. **S_____ w_____ from God. (2:17-18)**

- These four young men know right away that this king-sized crisis requires a God-sized solution. Prayer is their first move, not their last. We find them praying instead of panicking.

3. **S_____ t_____ to God. (2:19-23)**

- Wisdom from God is another expression of His care for us as His creatures. Wisdom is a great and sweet gift from our kind Creator.
- Living on this side of the closing of the canon (the completion of the writing of the Bible), we still pray for wisdom from God, but God answers us in a different way than the way He answered Daniel.
- God does not give us fresh revelation. We already have what we need in the pages of our Bibles (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- What we are really asking for when we ask for wisdom is for hearts to receive and rightly interpret what's been written down. We need to know and apply the wisdom that's already been given.
- This inscripturated wisdom from God often comes to us with the help of godly, wise, Spirit-led people around us, including spiritually mature brothers and sisters in Christ in our local church.
- Daniel doesn't take the answer to their prayers and run.
- He pauses to praise God. Even in this crisis situation, he gives thanks before he goes to the king with the only thing that will prevent the otherwise inevitable bloodshed. The scene is intense and urgent, but Daniel still makes sure to praise God. Wow, huh?

4. **S_____ n__ g_____ from God. (2:24-30)**

- Daniel says no to being a "glory grabber." Daniel refuses to take any of the credit for what only God has done.
- He stands before a powerful pagan king and drops a truth bomb on him. Daniel is bold and clever (and maybe even a little cheeky).
- The king got more than his dream explained. He was given the opportunity to see the failure of his own gods and the greatness of the only true God. Babylon's gods faceplant. Israel's God shines.